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A BOOK OF HILL VERSE

1913-1920

Edited by

David McK. White, '20

and

Parker Lloyd-Smith, '20



Philadelphia

THE JOHN C. WINSTON COMPANY

1920

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PARKER LLOYD-SMITH
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DAVID MCK. WHITE

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DEC 28 1920

TO
AMERICAN YOUTH
WHICH IS
THE HOPE OF THE WORLD

Oh, youngster of the harried eyes,
What bitter storms are in you raging?
You struggle and you agonize
And fail and falter, fall and rise—
Grim warrior in a gray disguise,
What battles are you waging?

You say not. You are the dear sort
Who fight in silence, sharing only
The light and music of the heart.
The tumult is for you to smart
And tremble at, in hours apart,
Ashamed and sick and lonely.

“How gay he is!” your father says.
“How pure!” your mother proudly muses;
While you go battling through the days
Along, along black, perilous ways,
Morose and frightened, in a daze
Of fear and guilt and bruises.

Oh, youngster of the harried eyes
Do all your elders prattle
Of youth's benign, unclouded skies?
Let them be happy with their lies.
We know, we know, oh, harried eyes,
That youth is storm and battle.

HERMANN HAGEDORN, '00.

INTRODUCTION

I

It often happens in the lives of school-boys, as in the lives of grown men, that a moment comes when they turn from their sports to a temporary earnestness. In these moments the fires of embryo genius may burn and the light of appreciation flash. It is of these moments that we are writing; it is to these moments that we are appealing. If it seem an unhealthy or unnatural tendency for our youth, we would ask that it be remembered that "poets are the trumpets which sing to battle—poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world;" that all too rare in our modern America are the moments of reflection and seriousness; and that in these moments are stored the lightnings of the genius of the future.

Through the panning of the years there has come to us gold—and dross. To the collecting and polishing of the true metal we have devoted our humble ability. Much there is that is rough—much is uncertain, but under the roughness we think that we have detected the glitter that is gold, and in the uncertainty we have found the strength that is faith. Let those who affect a scorn of efforts which have not the meters of Swinburne, nor the glory of Milton, nor the wealth of Browning, remember that the fire of youth burns intensely, multicolored; that the years will cleanse it to a white crystalline purity. Time will add the meters, visions the glory, hardships the wealth.

"Progress, man's distinctive mark alone—
Not God's and not the beasts'—God is, they are—
Man partly is and wholly hopes to be."

INTRODUCTION

II

The task of preparing this volume has been somewhat difficult. We have been hampered by an incomplete record of what has been written and published heretofore; many times we have profoundly mistrusted our own judgment. Often, impressed by our inability, we have laid aside the task unfinished, only to resume it in the hope that our mistakes will be pardoned for the sake of the little good we may have done.

Some years ago Dr. John A. Lester of The Hill faculty prepared a booklet of verse for the year of 1915. From this most prolific year we have garnered much that we think is exceptional. This pamphlet and the volumes of "The Hill Record" have been the only material that we possessed. Unfortunately, however, these volumes were complete only as far back as 1913, and before this time our files were so inaccurate and scanty that any collection from them would have been at best fragmentary. We realize, of course, that much of merit has thus been lost. Although we deeply regret this unfortunate circumstance, we have been powerless to correct it.

III

Three great names represent The Hill in American letters. It is our misfortune that only one of these falls within the years to which we have been narrowed. Alfred Raymond Bellinger, whose delightful sonnets head this book, came to The Hill in 1908. In his last year he filled the position of Editor-in-Chief of the "Record" with grace and distinction. He headed a board which stood high in point of literary versatility. Littlefield McCoy and Edmund Wilson are names from

INTRODUCTION

which more will be heard, and it is tremendously unfortunate that we could not have their complete work. Alfred Bellinger went to Yale and from there to France. He returned upon the signing of the armistice and has published his first book "Spires and Poplars." Of all the beautiful verse contained in this volume, there is one poem which to us is the most significant. Alfred Bellinger and John Overton were classmates and the best of friends during their school years. The death of John Overton in France came as a blow to his friend, and, in this beautiful tribute, Alfred Bellinger put the final seal upon a friendship which The Hill fostered and of which she is proud.

"The day he died, that last triumphant day,
Found him untainted with the thought of fear,
Facing the sudden death that crashed so near
Supremely lovable, supremely gay,
How buoyant and how swift. Who would not pray
So to burst into Heaven with a cheer?
The day he died, that last triumphant day,
Found him untainted with the thought of fear,
How can we pity him of whom men say,
'Our bravest and our best is fallen here?'
Ah, we are proud of him, who held him dear
And we remember that he led the way
The day he died, that last triumphant day."*

Edward Sheldon graduated from The Hill in 1904. In his senior year at Harvard he wrote "Salvation Nell," in which Mrs. Fiske played the title rôle. Then followed "Romance," which received immediate attention. His final work, "The Nigger" has been considered by many the most characteristic play of the essentially American school.

An artist whose genius expressed itself along different

* Reprinted by courtesy of The Yale University Press.

INTRODUCTION

lines is Hermann Hagedorn, *The Hill*, 1900. Although he began his active life in a career of business, he soon turned to an occupation which had been from early boyhood his chief recreation and pleasure. Since then he has published a number of books, which have given promise of a brilliant future. His appreciation of what *The Hill* had given him was proved by his dedication of "*The Heart of Youth*:"

"Not with swords, not with guns—
Mother of boys, you arm your sons,
East and West, South and North
With a word in their ears, you send them forth:
With a word you gird their souls
For storms and starry goals,
And send them over the lands
With a torch, a torch in their hands."

IV

To the alumni and friends of *The Hill*, whose kind interest has given us much-needed encouragement, we acknowledge our indebtedness. To Mr. Howard Bement and all associated with him in the English department, we owe whatever of taste or appreciation we have been able to make use of in this compilation. And, finally, we take this opportunity of expressing a very deep obligation to Mrs. John Meigs, mother and inspirer of the truest of "*Whatsoever Things are True*."

PARKER LLOYD-SMITH.
DAVID MCK. WHITE.

Princeton, New Jersey,
November, 1920.

OFFERTORY

I. To VENUS:	PAGE
C. L.....	11
Dido to Aeneas.....	12
Love.....	9
O, My Beloved.....	10
Sonnets.....	1
II. To CERES:	
A Mystery of the Sea.....	31
An Isle of Pines.....	28
Hymn to Pan.....	15
Lines.....	30
May Song.....	22
Reflection	24
Sonnet—Realms of Thought.....	26
Sunset.....	27
L'Envoi.....	16
The Blue Pool.....	21
The Fairest Flower.....	13
The Hermit Thrush.....	20
The Song of the Sunset.....	14
The Tramp Steamer.....	34
The Young Year.....	17
To a Woodland Pool.....	19
III. To MINERVA:	
A Hymn.....	58
An Ambition.....	43
In Imitation of the Rubaiyat.....	42

OFFERTORY (Continued)

	PAGE
L'Alumno.....	44
Lines.....	50
On the Death of a Child.....	47
Porphyria's Lover—After.....	55
Sonnet—"I Dreamed and Saw".....	40
Sonnet—"I Gaze Around".....	36
Sonnet—"I Look to Heaven".....	35
Sonnet—"It Seems All Love".....	38
Sonnet—"Memory".....	41
Sonnet—"Oh, Song of Death".....	37
Sonnet—"The Moonlight Streaming".....	39
The Common Soldier.....	51
The One-Hundredth Psalm	57
The Scorners.....	52
The Spy.....	54
The Young Philosopher.....	48
Westminster Bridge.....	46

TO VENUS

Sonnets

I

Into the wintry air we ride,
 Bathed in its sunshine, bracing to its chill
 And oh, the love of motion and the thrill
With which I feel again a horse's stride!
The joy of life that will not be denied,
 But surges upward heart and mind to fill!
 How like the days that are no more—yet still
How strange to have a comrade by my side.
And I am conscious of a little feud
 Between my present pleasure and my strong
 Tho' dying feeling of dismay; so long
Have I been wedded to my solitude.
 Yet now that it is time for us to part
 My solitude I banish, light of heart.

A Book of Hill Verse

II

We who were all but strangers yesterday
Have been transformed, I know not how, to friends;
For who can tell how mere acquaintance ends
And for a closer fellowship gives way?
And even how I know I scarce can say;
I sense it through the instinct Heaven lends
That mortals may perceive the gifts it sends.
But be the instinct's causes what they may,
I know that now for us there has begun
Another era, not to be defined.
A kind of tacit bond of mind and mind,
A silent comprehension, in which one
May feel the other's thought without the need
Of words. Such silent friends are friends indeed.

III

Fair pictured Sylvia with downcast eyes,
Lost in the twilight of a tranquil dream.
More than a lifeless portrait thou dost seem.
Surely a spirit there mine eye descries,
Upon the sky the bloom of evening lies;
The sun's red glories through the window stream
And on thee falls a warm and roseate beam.
Is there not warmth within thee that replies?
About thy head a gentle aureole,
Though in the glowing sunset doubly bright,
Yet seems to spring from some more inward light,
Born of thy perfect quietude of soul.
Oh would that I might somehow learn from thee
The secret of that great tranquillity!

IV

I watch her at innumerable teas.

Unruffled, gracious, courteous to all;

And then I laugh, for on my ears there fall
Voices that say "She loves thee less than these."

Ay, so she does: what if she love the breeze

That blows a moment through the empty hall

Better than me? Lo I am not so small

That I should mind it. I love whom I please.

Friendship is not comparative that we

Should tremble lest another be more dear.

What, jealousy, wouldst thou gain entrance here!
Avoid thee, friend, I can but laugh at thee.

I am her friend—that cannot be denied—

And, being so, am more than satisfied.

A Book of Hill Verse

V

Amid the torrent's heaving foam, how fair
Sometimes there gleams a little green-clad isle,
Where one may sit in idleness awhile,
And rest, immune from duty and from care,
As from the social stream behind us there
This isle of silence rises. Mile on mile
We ride without a syllable; a smile
May carry all the weight our words could bear.
Thrice blessed balm of silence! Would that we
Might ride forever through the green of May,
In such companionship ride far away,
Into the stillness of Eternity.
Sated with talk, I long to drink my fill
Of silence—with my cousin by me still.

VI

At times she is not like the girl I know
But something inapproachable and far
Above my level, and an unseen bar
Appears to be between us; and as though
Her friendship was forever lost, I go
Back to my well beloved books that are
Familiar lights; while she like some strange star
In unknown skies beyond me seems to glow.
What subtle charm it is I cannot tell
That raises phantoms thus for me to see.
The fault is none of hers, for presently
She meets my glance, and straightway breaks the spell.
"Cousin," she says, and smiles, and I in shame
Confess myself unworthy of the name.

VII

Tiny white clouds upon the morning sky
A Sabbath calm that may be all but heard.
I crave the joy of flying like a bird;
I am ecstatic, but I know not why.
I should be sad, for all alone am I.
She has not come, not sent me any word;
And yet, to waste the morning were absurd.
I'll forth and to the meadows, there to lie
Amid the fragrant grass, and think that she
Is losing more than I. I lose an hour
Of keen delight, but, though the very flower
Of perfect comrades Sylvia may be,
She misses a companion still more fair—
June dawn, to whom no mortal can compare.

VIII

Now it is over and we go our ways,
Never to be quite what we were before,
Never to ride together as of yore,
Never to live again these happy days.
I would not burden thee with thanks or praise.
I say farewell, and I can say no more.
New friends will come upon thee by the score,
Thou wilt forget thy cousin and his lays.
Nor would I have it otherwise for thee.
An hundred claim thee and thou shouldst not keep
The thought of me: let recollection sleep;
The pleasures of remembrance are for me.
I love thee none the less because I say
Farewell, and leave thee to pursue thy way.

ALFRED R. BELLINGER, '13.

A Book of Hill Verse

Love

(Halm: Liebe)

My heart, I have a question:

What's love? Come, get it done!

"Two souls and but one purpose,
Two hearts that beat as one!"

Whence comes Love? What's the answer?

"It comes; that's all I know!"

And say, how does love vanish?

"'Tis not love that does so!"

And say, what Love is purest?

"That loses all self-will!"

And when is Love the deepest?

"When silent and most still!"

And when is Love the richest?

"When giving of its own!"

And say, what is Love's language?

"'Tis dumb; it loves alone!"

SEWARD B. COLLINS, '17.

O My Beloved

O my Beloved, I sigh for thee still
As I sighed in the desert, 'neath the first dim dawn
Of the world from chaos, before man's self was born.

O my Beloved, I am thine, thine still,
Thine was I made before all worlds, beyond all time;
And still thine shall I be when they drop from the sign.

O my Beloved, I thirst for thee still,
For the pure waters of thy love I burn with thirst,
For the fathomless fountains of thy tenderness.

Though I faint in the heat, and thou guard the ice-gate
Of the North King's far realm, though an adamant Fate
Set finite bounds,—O infinite joy I know thou dost wait.

I shall find thee at last, when there is no more sea,
When the sun dies in darkness, and the heavens them-
selves flee
Forever; so Allah hath written, and so shall it be.

ANONYMOUS.

A Book of Hill Verse

C. L.

There is a love I know that's holy;
There is a love that's always true;
And it's the love that I shall solely
Always feel for none but you.

When cares of life around me gather,
And problems try to pull me down,
'Tis then that love of you does ever
Bear to me the victor's crown.

What evil dares e'en to come near me
When thoughts of you are on my mind?
How sadness flees with you to cheer me—
Always patient, gentle, kind!

But God has barred us from that heaven,
And says such joy can never be.
We cannot loose the chains so riven;
Only death can set us free.

But, though your charms will to another
Entrusted be, and Heaven dispose
That happiness you both may gather,
I shall never seek repose.

Through life and into death I'll follow,
Diverting sorrow, bringing gain.
Without you life would be so hollow
Death would lose its fearful name.

From now you nevermore will see me,
But still, the tolling of the bell
From charge of duty then will free me.
Dear beloved one, farewell.

DAVID MCK. WHITE, '20.

A Book of Hill Verse

Dido to Aeneas

Come back, I cannot be immortal
Nor shun my lot, nor that dark portal,
Cerberus-guarded, yawning 'neath my feet.

Come back, a thousand times I call thee,
Let not the siren's song enthrall thee.
Pass thou with wax-sealed ears their craggy seat.

The friends whom thou and I remember
Like oak-leaves in the bleak December
Silently falling, went their pathless way.

Thou walkest in the autumn forest,
The ripening fields which thou adorest,
Rustling again the leaves where once we lay.

But halt! the forest is Avernus,
The field Elysium—thou Saturnus,
Leave them alone, nor wake them to our pain.

Come back, I am content to follow
Where'er thou ledest. We will swallow
Draughts of forgetfulness—come back again.

The shadows of the night are falling
I hear the silvery voices calling
Oh my beloved—come to me—again!

PARKER LLOYD-SMITH, '20.

TO CERES

The Fairest Flower

I see a massive, rocky wall,
Where nature spilled her choicest vial,
And mantled with an ivy pall,
A weather-beaten dial.
The hollyhocks in stately rows
Stand bowing with majestic grace;
While, nearby, in the cool shade, shows
The violet's tiny face.
There, rosebuds nodding to the sun,
With priceless dew-pearls still are wet;
Here, dancing in its elfish fun,
Is sweetest mignonette.
Oh sweet the rose and bright the sun,
And all the other flowers fair;
But in this garden there is one
Far, far beyond compare!
I met her skipping by the wall,
And stopped, as tenderly I kissed her;
This sweetest bud is best, though small;
It is my little sunbeam sister.

EBEN FINNEY, '15.

This poem was awarded the Headmaster's prize for poetry in 1915

The Song of Sunset

Silver sails on a sea of gold
And the sun swinging low in the west;
The ocean sounding his anthem old
And rocking us all to rest.
A soft breeze leaning us toward the lee,
Ruffles the golden waves;
My heart, which is swelling with the sea,
The peace of the ocean craves.
It seems, in that blaze of the waning day,
That the strains of soft music hum;
They sound from the sun's path, miles away,
As over the water they come.
Thus the day goes out with its old sea song
And a flood of the sun's crimson light;
And the moon's silver orb, which comes gliding along,
Is ushering in the cool night.

EBEN FINNEY, '15.

Hymn to Pan

Thee do we sing who art god of the shepherd,
Lord of the hills and the high-rooted plain;
Now in a round to thee tread we a measure
'Mid nodding of harebells and quiver of grain.
Throat is awake, and the syrinx awakens
And pipes to the sound of our welling refrain
To the father of flocks and the lover of man—
Latmos now shouts from the walls of his hollows—
Great is the great god Pan!

Here in the vale where the eglantine bloweth,
Raise we the earth of our altars to thee,
Green with the ripening reed that thou lovest,
Decked with the bough of the blossoming tree,
The deep-scented muskrose, the red-flaming poppy
Of Lethe, the jessamine—O, may they be
All to thy glory, father of man,
All to the praise of thy glory forever—
Great is the great god Pan!

White lie the bullocks and sheep of our pasture,
Slain for thy feast, and our bounty is thine—
The hot, gushing gore and foamed libations—
Warm from the udders, and ruby from vine—
Drunk of the earth—of thy throat: for thy might is
The earth's, and all flesh is of thee! Lo the wine
Of thy life is now sped to the source whence it ran!
Deep to the fount of thy goodness it courses—
The fame and the goodness of Pan!

ALFRED NICHOLSON, '17.

L'Envoi

Hark! where far o'er the western plain,
As the surge of an anthem drear,
The voice of the torrent, the tongues of the rain,
The dying dirge of the Year.
Call, while he in his glory gleaming
Swoons, as the fire of a meteor, dreaming
When youth will burn through his veins again,
And the wine of his life run clear.

The wild, wet wings of the wheeling blast
Beat o'er the far lands—soon
Will the raiment yield of a year that is past,
By the strife of the tempest strewn;
And Love will rejoice, and his song be borne,
On the gleaming limbs of the laughing Morn,
Far to the shimmering stars aghast,
Or the lurid lips of the moon.

Fly forth, O Year, till thy tresses shine
Far where the surges flee:
For thy grapes are trodden, and drunk is the wine
That flowed from thy winepress free. . .
Fly forth, my soul, on the feet of thy yearning,
To realms of the dawn and the daystar, burning
Over the pulse of the panting brine
And the shout of the bounding sea.

ALFRED NICHOLSON, '17.

The Young Year

Swift as Aurora, maiden of dawning,
Breaks in her glory the bonds of the night;
Swift as the morning-star, waiting her coming,
Faints in the fire of her radiance bright,
Faints at her coming, though longing her presence,
Faints in the dream of her ravished delight;

Thus in warm beauty the bride of the west wind,
Borne by her Love from Hesperian shore,
Rides o'er the breast of the free-flowing surges,
Embraced in his love, to the lands that adore,
Adore her warm beauty of sunlight and shadow,
Rememb'ring the dream of her presence of yore.

See, where the storm-clouds, swift at her coming,
Course the black heavens in maddened array,
Lash the dark deep with warm tears of devotion,
Then smile, as they yield to the glory of day.
Lo, the flood of the young year is welling in gladness,
And Neptune is spurring his steeds through the spray.

The might of her radiance blooms on the forelands;
The highlands of darkness, the wild wooded plain,
The fens of the shadow now laugh in new splendor,
Laugh loud and long in their splendor again.
The wastes now shout their new glory, and burden
The stars of the night with their wine-fed refrain.

The Young Year—*Continued*

Dance, O Bacchantes, mad in your revels,
 Flushed by the grape of the free-flowing vine!
Dance, for on Naxos the myrtle is blowing,
 Blowing and wafting her bloom on the brine;
Come, ere the faint east in frozen flame shivers,
 Come, wreathed in ivy, with thyrsi of pine.

And Pan of the greenwood, ah, wake from thy slumber;
 The pastures are waiting thy pipe as of old;
The reed of the meadow now ripens to greet thee;
 God of the shepherd and guard of the fold,
Wake, for the high noon now gleams on the woodlands
 Clad in faint raiment, but dearer than gold.

How shall we rise in the fire of devotion,
 Mount to thy footprints, maiden of might,
Fleeter of foot than the flame of our passion,
 Fleeter and fairer than day in his flight?
Wrapped in our blindness, how shall we sing to thee,
 Maiden most blessed, mother of light?

ALFRED NICHOLSON, '17.

To a Woodland Pool

When first the evening shadows steal
Across the meadows, through the trees,
To meet thy beauties, and conceal
In darkness all thy majesties.

Then from thy silver depths arise,
In ghostly shape and mystic flight,
Deep, purple vapors which disguise
And change thee in the fading light.

From out behind a starry maze,
The golden moon goes up the sky,
And scatters wide the mantling haze
From off thy bosom, silently.

Then sifting through the quivering leaves,
Thy silver light doth gently fall,
And on thy shimmering bosom weaves
In golden threads a faery pall.

ALBERT H. SCHROEDER, JR., '16.

The Hermit Thrush

The waning light of day fades on the sight.
The crimson sun sinks slowly past the pines.
The fleecy clouds flare up in lovely light;
The lake reflects their glory as it shines.

The creeping dusk spreads slowly on the North.
The night breeze swells the sleeping trees to sound.
From pine-clad slopes the whip-poor-will calls forth.
The silence of the wild clings all around.

Now in the stillness a sweet sound is heard;
Its clear peals echo softly through the brush,
More like an angel's song than of a bird,
It is the music of the hermit thrush!

No note more sweet to mortal ear is known.
No nightingale can human souls so thrill!
As through the northern woodland there is blown,
The brown and speckled evening singer's trill!

TOWNSEND SCUDDER, III, '19.

The Blue Pool in the Swamp of Sardak y Noval

Down through the depths of the depthless,
Narrow, and sombre and cool,
Down in the heart of the heartless,
O, where is the soul of the pool?
Now silence is golden, while silver is sound,
As the motto proverbial saith,
But the silence of Sardak, that stillness profound,
Why, the silence of Noval is Death.

For the surface of Sardak is smiling,
Reflecting the light of the day,
But the soul of the swamp it is laughing,
In a hollow and hideous way,
And red lights and green,
In its depths may be seen,
Where the light of God's day cannot fall;
And the foot of the well is the gateway of Hell
While a mad God rules over all.

O! The song of the Sardak is silence,
Malevolent, absolute, sheer,
And the God of the place is a horrible face,
And the name of that God, it is Fear.
Now what is the tune of the hideous rune,
That swells from the mad God's gate?
O! some do say 'tis a maniac lay,
And the soul of the Sardak is Hate!

OLIVER W. GIBBS, '20.

A Book of Hill Verse

May Song

(Goëthe: Mailed)

How bright all nature
Appears to me!
How shines the sun!
How laughs the lea.

New buds appearing
On every limb,
And sounds each thicket
With Spring's glad hymn.

From every bosom
Come joy and mirth.
O bliss, O fortune,
O sun! O earth!

O love, O love!
So wondrous fair,
Like clouds of morning
High, high in air!

Thou mak'st the meadow
With wealth replete;
Giv'st all the fragrance
Of blossoms sweet.

A Book of Hill Verse

May Song—*Continued*

O maiden, maiden,
How I love thee!
How thine eyes sparkle!
How thou lov'st me!

No lark hath purer
Mightier love
For song, for flowers,
The air above,

Than for thee, dearest,
Consumes my breast;
To me thou givest
Youth, spirit, zest

For Maytime dances,
For melody.
May thou be happy
As thou lov'st me!

SEWARD B. COLLINS, '17.

Reflection

I love those springtime evenings at The Hill,
When, mid the twilight shadows and the dusk,
We stroll about the campus, arm in arm.
The grass, with dewy fragrance cool and damp,
Like carpet, yields beneath our ling'ring feet.
The evening air wafts lightly o'er us all,
And brings the drowsy chirping of the birds,
With Nature's nightly sounds, to ear; and then
Is born to us from gardens far away,
The odors sweet, of flowers blooming there
The beauty so does over-awe us all
That we are half afraid to speak, as if
Our voices would disturb the sleepy earth.
The darkness slowly deepens, and the lights
From out the chapel windows gleam more bright.
Out there, not far, across the open field,
We hear some fellow school-mates singing low.
My spirit swells and swells within my breast;
I would the power to utter all the thoughts
That rise and fall within my soul, were mine.

* * * * *

Long after, when my youth has waned, and passed,
And all of it that's left to me is gone
Except its joyful, pleasant memories;
Long after all my limbs are stooped with age,
And locks to silver all, long since, have turned,

Reflection—*Continued*

The mem'ries of these days will be most dear.
Just as in some green forest glade there stands
An ancient oak tree, gnarled and bent with years,
Among whose mass of dead and rattling leaves
There flutters in the breeze one leaf of gold;
So, while this mortal life shall yet be mine,
There shall hang always in my inmost heart
The leaf of gold, which bears in letters bright,
Those golden mem'ries, and the scenes I loved
So long ago, while I was at The Hill.

EBEN FINNEY, '15.

Realms of Thought

I wandered through a kingdom, vast and old,
A land of sweet remembrance, shadowy thought,
Where time and rolling ages count for naught,
And merely serve new wonders to unfold.
In many a somber tower, green with mould,
In niches dark for ancient tomes I sought,
And many a glimpse of flitting figures caught;
Untreasured many a casket of its gold.

Again mid ghostly woods and mountain spires,
I seemed to drift adown a gentle stream,
Where Nature in bright robes the lily tires,
And moonbeams on th' enchanted waters gleam;
Above me heard the song of angel choirs;
And wondered if I waked or did but dream.

ERNEST SIMPSON, '15.

This poem was awarded the Headmaster's prize for poetry in 1914

Sunset

Lower, lower, lower, sinks the sun,
Down the sloping heaven to the sea;
Time's glass has run,
The day is done,
The cooling shades of night envelop me.
With molten gold the western waters glow,
The clouds are pink, and rosy red the sky,
Though no winds blow,
The cloud shapes go,
The vivid colors darken, and so die.
Now faintly, sweetly, pealing far away,
The village church bell breathes its mellow chime,
"Watch ye, and pray,"
It seems to say,
For no man knows just when will come his time.
Thus, ere we realize, the shadows fall,
And sinks our sun; life's colors wane, have passed;
Then after all
We hear that call,
Which, sweetly ringing, bids us home at last.
O let us ever strive to heed that bell,
That inner voice, which always speaks the right;
Then our doubts quell,
Our tasks do well,
At last we will be ready for the night.
And when the evening shadows 'round us file,
The world, its pleasures, dwindle from our sight,
A little while,
And with a smile,
We pass beyond the darkness, into light.

EBEN FINNEY, '15.

An Isle of Pines

An isle of pines, of swaying, fragrant pines;
A brightness in the dark, a haven fair;
'Tis where my aching spirit oft reclines.
My mem'ries and my hopes are centered there.
Its shining beach, each mossy forest glade,
Each clearing wild, and every single tree,
Are scenes in colors which will never fade,
All so beloved that they are part of me.
The spirit of my youth is wandering
Among the friendly trunks upon that isle;
With heavy heart always I'm pondering
And hope again to find it, in a while.
There 'mid those trees a child's emotion grew,
Child's pledge was sworn and shed were childish tears;
Th' emotion burns with ardor always new,
Waxes in strength through all the passing years.
There, buried deep beneath the greatest pine
A writing lies, tear-marred, in childish hand.
Six years ago I wrote that little line,
And lay me down and wept upon the sand.
The dear old pines caressed with magic breath
My troubled head, as on the sand I lay.
I fell into a sleep as deep as death,
And woke not till the coming of the day.

An Isle of Pines—*Continued*

They've watched me as I grew from boy to man;
They've watched my hopes and watched my longings
too;

There's naught I do the magic pines can't scan,
And, what is more, I know they're watching you.
Some day those magic pines will draw me home,
And, by the wish that's still left buried there
They'll pass the spell on you, so you shall come
And thus fulfil the wish left to their care.

Whisper, old pines;
Secrets of the past;
Things that are gone.
Guard these few lines
That they may last.
Whisper on.

EBEN FINNEY, '15.

Lines

One summer's day when the world was fair,
With never a thought of worry or care,
I slipped from the shore and down the bay,
Out where the romping white-caps play,
To ride before the rollicking breeze,
And feel the spray of the sun-warmed seas.

With the bellying sails drawn stiff and taut
By a lashing wind that rudely caught
And swung my craft from crest to crest,
Ever toward the sun-gold west—
I sailed and sailed on the laughing sea,
Apart from the world, alone and free.

With each breath that I drew from the salt-filled blast,
That through the straining rigging passed—
With the moaning chant of a wild sea dirge
Ebbing and swelling with sudden surge—
The joy of life swept over me,
And left my soul in ecstasy.

Then through the fading sunset light
I raced the wind in carefree flight,
And down a golden sun-swept lane
I drifted toward the shore again,
To vanish in its purple haze
Beneath the sun's last dying rays.

ANONYMOUS.

A Mystery of the Sea

The watchers looked to seaward through
The stormy evening gloom;
A ship with flapping canvas white
Was drifting to her doom.

No flag was at her masthead high;
No crew upon her deck;
It seemed as though no crew were there
To perish with her wreck.

"She'll never gain the offing now,"
The eldest watcher said,
"She's drifting fast to leeward of
The reef off Wenlock's Head.

"For ne'er a ship can cross the reef
'Neath storm or sunny sky."
And so he spoke; and with the gale
The stranger ship went by.

Then night sank o'er the headland dark,
And hid the sea from sight,
But still the storm made terrible
The lightning lighted night.

The slanting rain flashed in its glare;
Waves beat the lonely shore,
And earth and sea and heaven shook
With thunder's crashing roar.

A Mystery of the Sea—Continued

At midnight from a rain-swept pier,
A lonely watcher spied
A ship with flapping canvas white
A-drifting 'gainst the tide.

She rolled as rolled the ocean dark,
And heaved on ev'ry swell;
With ev'ry roll the watcher heard
The tolling of her bell.

No crew was on her sodden deck;
No light was seen within;
She seemed naught but a specter ship,
Deserted, tall, and dim.

Fast on she came, a nameless ship
The waves could ne'er o'erwhelm;
But then the lonely watcher spied
Lashed to her reeling helm

A drooping corpse with swinging head,
A pilot of the Styx,
And with his frozen hand he clutched
A Christless crucifix.

But 'mid the thunder of the surf
She struck upon the shore,
And soon her fragments strewed the coast
For seven miles or more.

A Mystery of the Sea—*Continued*

And when the sun rose up next morn
To bring a cloudless day,
The white-sailed ship was nowhere seen
A-drifting in the bay.

But e'en now, when at Peacock Inn
The ale's passed merrily,
When logs are on the blazing hearth,
And storms are on the sea,

The watcher tells his time-worn tale
And quaffs his ale with pride;
But even then a nameless ship
Is drifting fast with bows a-dip
Against the wind and tide.

HUGH O'N. HENCKEN, '20

This poem was awarded the Headmaster's prize for poetry in 1920

The Tramp Steamer

Roll,—creak,—sway,—roll;—
Roll,—creak,—sway;—
On, and on with never a goal;
Over the pathless way.
O my paint is off, and my stack is bent,
And my sides are torn with wear;
The bo'swain's pipe is my only song
To cheer my heart from care.
Where the rates are high,
Even there go I,
Till my freighting task is done;
Then off to the sea,—
To the sea and the sky;
Like a spectre come, and gone.
I am homeless, lawless, and alone;
No nation's flag I wave,
But the jolly Jack which is all my own,
With the sea my home,—and grave.
Roll,—creak,—sway,—roll;—
Roll,—creak,—sway;—
On, and on with never a goal;
Over the pathless way.

EBEN FINNEY, '15.

TO MINERVA

Sonnets

I

I look to Heaven where God is known to be;
I look to Earth and see him ev'rywhere.
I gaze out o'er that blue expanse, the sea;
Lo, in His glory God is even there!
I look into the great unfathomed sky
Where myriads of stars fill me with awe,
It is so vast, and then, I know not why,
On looking down, I know 'twas God I saw.
I turn to sin where earthly joys are found,
And hope that there no sign of God will be,
But conscience holds my struggling spirit bound:
It is the voice of God restraining me.
 I need no proof; a God there surely is,
 And ev'ry one and ev'rything is His.

This poem was awarded the Headmaster's prize for poetry in 1918

II

I gaze around the schoolroom's spacious walls,
Bedecked with forms of men whose souls still live
Beyond the narrow span that custom calls,
"Man's earthly life"; for now their deeds do give
An earthly animation to them still.
Though cold in body, yet their spirits rule
The lives of men, and thus they ever will
Continue leading. Then I ask myself
This question, "Will my spirit too survive,
And bear me on unto that lofty goal,
Of man's high estimation? I would give—"
Ah! there's the point? What would I do to live?
For man is what he makes himself to be;
The future of my name now rests with me.

III

O Song of Death, hast thou a melody
Whose chords do mutually ring the mortal soul
In sympathy? or does the spirit free
Prefer the song of Life to measured toll
Of melancholy? Surely it would seem
That, as the runner strains to reach the line,—
Or as some mother, who doth early dream
Of deeds her babe will do, will not resign
Her dreams till they accomplished bring reward,—
Or as the gallant warrior with his sword
Strikes to the last, till, weak from mortal wounds,
He falls, then straining strikes again and swoons:
The spirit of each mortal man must ring
In unison, to songs the immortals sing.

THOMAS J. FOSTER, JR., '19.

Sonnets

I

It seems all love of honor now has gone.
My life's ambition is like most men's lives.
In birth and youth successfully it thrives;
In manhood radiant as the morning sun.
I look for wonders—glory—honor—done!
But no, it weakens; drooping, fades away—
The sadness, not the beauty, of a day
Which, dying, still reflects the joy of dawn.
Then night—the power of willing soon decays—
A living death with failure's hopelessness—
The darkness of despair—but one light stays;
In frantic sorrow this I vainly bless.
Now all I have—God help me—are the rays—
The golden dreams I pictured of success.

A Book of Hill Verse

II

The moonlight streaming in my window here
Flows from the fountain of forgetfulness.
It says, "I look on those you love so dear.
The world is small and mean; regretfulness
Is naught; your souls will rise and live in peace,
Unharm'd by this earth's never-idle tongue.
Fulfilment you will gain; your prayers will cease;
Your longed-for perfect life will have begun;
So laugh the self-important hours away—"
I do not dare to listen to its song.
They are the tempter's words; life is not play;
The hours have their meaning; sloth is wrong!
Each second's thought a seed; the fruit will grow,
And we shall reap the kind of lives we sow.

III

I dreamed and saw a flower rare to see,
Of gorgeous beauty, to the world, unknown,
Unseen—but there; and in a place that we
Would doubt—nay laugh—to think of beauty sown;
A hostile place—unsympathetic earth—
None to believe, none to appreciate
The faint and precious message of its birth
Until, yet in the bud, it dies. Too late
Lusk world, too late—a priceless heritage
Forever gone—God, grant the dream a lie,
Or send to me a Joseph of this age.
I feel it is Thy beauty that will die.
And even as I dreamed, I saw Its face,
And prayed my God to grant a moment's grace.

DAVID MCK. WHITE, '20.

Sonnet—Memory

Reflector of the candle of the past,
Who castest gleams upon the hours to come,
And, though our customs be both fixed and fast,
Dost ease our course upon our journey home!
O thou who dost enrich and glorify
The ethereal shadows of this inane time,
Consolidating Nature's majesty
With echoes of our past life's distant chime!
How little should we know of lapsed years;
How hollow an existence ours should be;
How like our childhood's many empty fears;
Without the enrichment of our memory.
A gift of God, what man could wish for more
Than that he be enriched from memory's store.

HORACE CARLETON, '19.

In Imitation of the Rubaiyat

Peace! For the Sun, swift fading from our sight,
Commands the lingering Day to haste its flight,
Sinks in a red eclipse behind the mosque,
And bathes it in a flood of crimson light.

The sovereign Moon, fast following with her train
Of myriad stars, approaches once again,
Thus nights and days, regarding naught but Time,
E'er follow each on each in endless chain.

Come, fill the cup, nor think of night and day;
Fear not some mischief to our human clay.
Sure clay for pots, and pots for wine were meant.
What if ill come? In time 'twill go away.

What boots it now to moan for tasks undone?
Make haste to win what gold may yet be won:
For, long since has the fateful Glass of Life
Been turned—and lo! the sands will soon be run.

Death shall the Sultan from his throne expel,
And lay him lowly in a narrow cell.
Both king and beggar live their little day,
And then depart—Why? Whither? Who can tell?

For all men were by that great Potter made,
Shaped on Life's Wheel—His every touch obeyed;
Some large, some small, and some unshapely wrought,
Yet all of clay of the same shelf are laid.

ERNEST SIMPSON, '15.

An Ambition

To say what no one e'er has said before—
That is my longing; that my fond desire.
To turn some unread page of Fancy o'er—
To draw some unplayed strain from out my lyre;
And so raise one man's life a little higher.

To sing a song that ne'er has yet been sung—
That do I crave. I'd strive with all my might
To find some measures new my thoughts among—
A soft and dreaming chant; a carol bright
That should make one man's crushing load more light.

To see a vision that was never seen—
I ask; and may that vision be a ray
Direct from Heaven; true and pure and clean,
To shine upon the traveler's care-fraught way,
And turn just one man's darkness into day.

HARRY P. KELLER, '15.

L'Alumno

'Twas but lately that I sate
Eager for my man's estate,
Anxious for things so soon to be,
To flee from care to liberty.
Now all is changed here at The Hill;
No longer must we do the will
Of masters primed with great desires
To light crude boyhood's inner fires.
No more in this familiar place
We'll walk with seniors' studied grace;
Nor browse 'mid Learning's ivied halls,
Prisoned by Regulation's walls.
Ne'er again to tread the fields
When, damp with snow, the soft sod yields
To boyhood's ruthless trampling feet
As, wand'ring through the woods replete
With tender plants so green and fair,
The youth absorbs the clean-washed air.
No more to sing our even hymns
While from the near-by leafy limbs,
Ans'ring organ, note for note,
The robin swells his flaming throat.
Nor e'er to stroll across the grass
Watched by smaller boys who pass;

L'Alumno—*Continued*

Nor stroll, companion by our side,
Enviously by others eyed.
At last the battle's lost or won,
And life's first labor has been done;
Success has smiled on upturned face;
Failure has grinned with equal grace;
Our mem'ries go in sceptered pall
In after times to stand or fall.
But we who glory now lay down
Have traded for a better crown.

ROGER B. KEENEY, '20.

**Lines Written in Answer to Wordsworth's Sonnet
"Westminster Bridge."**

Ah yes, the houses seem asleep—
And all that mighty heart lies still,
The splendor of the morning waits
And night and rest now have their will.

But 'neath that very rest so deep
What light dare steep the souls of men?
Who sees the ghoul-like figures creep
In brothel or in robber's den?

Who knows the horrors of the night?
Who hears the mother's aching cry?
The breaking of a heart? the sight
Of those who live life's parody?

The summer sun will once more let
Its radiance on the world below
But since that self-same sun has set
Who hears the wails, the wails of woe?

Not he, who on Westminster Bridge
Doth muse upon the day unborn,
And turneth into sacrilege
The awful meaning of the morn.

PARKER LLOYD-SMITH, '20.

On the Death of a Child

(Uhland: Auf dem Tod eines Kindes.)

So silent did you come, so silent go,
A fleeting guest upon this world of men;
From where? to where?—we ask, but only know
From out God's hand, and to God's hand again.

SEWARD B. COLLINS, '17.

The Young Philosopher

I sit alone on a great, grey rock
As the slow day changes to night;
And I watch the water's placid calm
Suffused in the sun's last light.
I live again in my dreamy thought
Of silken gossamers
And dying colors softly wrought,
Back in the ghosts of years.
There I sat on that self-same rock
Alone by that self-same shore
Even as I am sitting now,
Dreaming my dream once more.
My eyes grow dim with unshed tears,
My heart feels throbbing pain;
Back, 'way back, in those ghosts of years,
O God, let me live again!

* * * * *

Why wail I thus, and why that backward look?
Why does tomorrow never come at all?
And why are thoughts of yesterday more dear
Than those of today, or even those to come?
I think and think, and though I strive to see,
Naught comes to view beyond the veil of clay.
The mystery of years is not for me.

The Young Philosopher—*Continued*

The bugle blares, the drum beats loud,
The country stirs from shore to shore,
While to the skies
Wild shouts arise;
Exultant, angry, eager cries
Of war, war, war!

ANONYMOUS.

Lines

“Brother.” The word does not a love imply;
Instead a comradeship; a fellowship.
A firm compact of friendship understood;
Friendship to help, to lend, to give, to die!
And then with standard in the light unfurl’d,
Stand back to back, alone, and fight the world!

Oft have I chid against those Bonds of Love
Which sometimes seem as though they hinder me;
But afterward, when my dull eyes can see,
Devotion and concern, there—far above
Impatient will and restless grumbling—shine,
Then I behold thy wisdom, Mother Mine.

EBEN FINNEY, '15.

The Common Soldier

In the furrowed fields where the rich earth yields
Its store of ripening grain,
I tilled the soil with patient toil
A livelihood to gain.

While through the year with never a fear
Of poverty's sore distress,
I toiled in peace for my wealth's increase
In humble happiness.

Those joys, alas! too quickly pass,
And happy toil must cease;
For Famine's hand grips all the land
And war has severed peace.

'Tis but a dream, that joy supreme,
Of humble work and toil,
For I've left my farm for war's alarm
And battle's fiendish broil.

In the charge and strife where human life
Is counted but as dross,
I gaze at death through its scorching breath;
I know I too must pass

That dim gulf riven twixt earth and Heaven,
And from the smoke of Hell
I shall seek its door with the cannon's roar,
My only funeral knell.

K. F. POTTER, '15.

The Scorners

They sat "in the Seat of the Scornful,"
The Seat that is long and high,
That stands by the Road of the Sons of Men
Where the Nations are passing by.

But never stirred They Themselves to lend
The toiler a helping hand,
And never a single deed They wrought
For the glory or weal of Their Land.

But They sneered at the man with the hardened hands,
And the man with the hardened heart,
At the man who had gathered his wealth by stealth,
Or by trade in an honest mart.

They rested Their feet on the mounded turf,
The sod of Their Fathers' graves;
They scoffed at the power of sceptered kings,
And laughed at the chains of slaves.

And sneering They gazed at the cheering throngs
That crowded the conqueror's march,
As the ragged flags of the ranked array
Passed under the marble arch.

The Scorners—*Continued*

They laughed at the Land of Their Fathers' pride,
The Land that had given Them birth;
The Nation Their Fathers had died to make
They mocked in their scornful mirth.

They scoffed at the Blood of the Martyred Saints;
They jeered at the Lord who died;
They mocked at the God who had made Their souls,
And They laughed in Their blazing pride,

Until They declared that there was no God
In mountain or sky or sea,
And They laughed at the Power that shapes the worlds
And the planets yet to be.

In Their hearts They had kindled the flame of scorn,
And fed it with jest and jeer,
'Till Their fatted souls were cindered black,
And forever were charred and sear.

HUGH O'N. HENCKEN, '20.

The Spy

With iron chains they bind his wrists
With a silken scarf his weary eye,
And 'neath the shades of death's dark mists
"For God's sake, help, I dare not die!"

Against a grim, grey wall he stands
The lines of dread from the pale face fly
As he casts his mind on his own, dear lands
"Oh, give me strength, a man to die!"

The minutes pass, a golden sun
Climbs higher in the eastern skies;
His life is spent, his purpose won
"Through Him alone; man never dies."

The prisoner mourns his fate no more,
Behind the scarf he lifts his eyes
Above the death-squad's fatal roar;
"See, Prussians, how a Christian dies!"

OLIVER W. GIBBS, '20.

Porphyria's Lover

They say I'm mad; but I am not.
They say that hell will be my lot.
I killed her. Yes, that I admit;
But now forevermore she'll sit
Beside me with her hand in mine.
With such a vision can I pine?
She loved me. For a moment's space
She flew in dread convention's face,
And then she to the whole world proved
'Twas I and only I she loved.
Now let them kill me if they will.
'Twill only be a moment till
I'll see her blessèd face once more;
Her fairy hair bound as of yore;
Her wondrous eyes—compassion's home;
That love she ne'er before had shown.
Through countless ages in the light
Of God we'll sit as on that night.

* * * * *

The light of day is growing dim.
I see a vision as of Him,
Our Saviour, as He walked this earth—
A mortal by immortal birth.
Immortal love is in His eye.
A love so holy cannot die!

Porphyria's Lover—*Continued*

God! God! forgiveness for my deed!
A double sinner not to heed
Laws made twice sacred by the loss
Of Him who died upon the cross.

* * * * *

The shadows fall; the glooms increase:
For all my cares and sorrows, peace.

DAVID MCK. WHITE, '20.

This poem was awarded the Headmaster's prize for poetry in 1919

The One-Hundredth Psalm

Rejoice, ye lands and peoples all,
Before the Lord, rejoice;
His goodness sing, and to Him bring
Pure joy in heart and voice.

Know ye the Lord, He is our God,
Who fashioned us of old;
We are His own, and His alone,—
The sheep within His fold.

Go through the portals of the Lord
With joyous thankfulness.
Your voices raise with fervent praise;
His name revere and bless.

For good and holy is the Lord,
His mercy ever sure:
To every race His truth and grace
Forever shall endure.

SEWARD B. COLLINS, '17.

A Hymn

When in contrition Thy sin-loving children
Turn from their wrong to Thy truth's holy ray,
Humbled before Thee, in mercy receive them;
Turn not, O Father, Thy great heart away.

Long have we erred, Lord, and struggled in darkness,
Burdened, discouraged, by care weighted down.
But to a happier life now we turn us;
Rich is its kingdom, for joy is its crown.

Hear, then, in mercy, and succor Thy children;
Grant them Thy peace; turn their night into day.
Low have they fallen,—now tenderly raise them;
Turn not, O Father, Thy great heart away.

HARRY P. KELLER, '15.

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